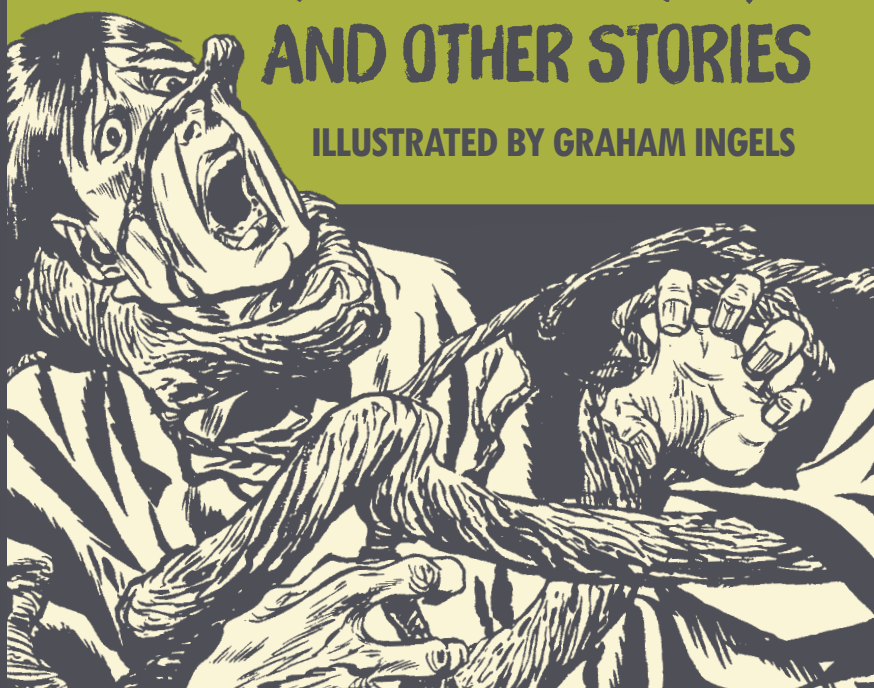




GRAVE BUSINESS

AND OTHER STORIES

ILLUSTRATED BY GRAHAM INGELS



GRAVE BUSINESS

AND OTHER STORIES



TITLES IN THIS SERIES

Corpse On The Imjin And Other Stories (*Harvey Kurtzman*)
Came The Dawn And Other Stories (*Wallace Wood*)
50 Girls 50 And Other Stories (*Al Williamson*)
’Tain’t The Meat ... It’s The Humanity And Other Stories (*Jack Davis*)
Fall Guy For Murder And Other Stories (*Johnny Craig*)
Child Of Tomorrow And Other Stories (*Al Feldstein*)
Sucker Bait And Other Stories (*Graham Ingels*)
Zero Hour And Other Stories (*Jack Kamen*)
Judgment Day And Other Stories (*Joe Orlando*)
Bomb Run And Other Stories (*John Severin*)
Aces High (*George Evans*)
Spawn Of Mars And Other Stories (*Wallace Wood*)
Grave Business And Other Stories (*Graham Ingels*)

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Forty Whacks And Other Stories (*Jack Kamen*)

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Guided by EC historian John Benson’s research on EC release dates, we present the stories in this book in the order in which they originally appeared:

“Jury Duty!” in *Crime SuspenStories* #6, August–September 1951
“The Works ... In Was!” in *Tales From the Crypt* #25, August–September 1951
“Revenge Is the Nuts!” in *Vault of Horror* #20, August–September 1951
“Hounded to Death!” in *Haunt of Fear* #8, July–August 1951
“Horror Under the Big-Top!” in *Crime SuspenStories* #7, October–November 1951
“Political Pull!” in *Tales From the Crypt* #26, October–November 1951
“Warts So Horrible?” in *Haunt of Fear* #9, September–October 1951
“Partnership Dissolved!” in *Crime SuspenStories* #8, December 1951–January 1952
“Horror! Head ... It Off!” in *Tales From the Crypt* #27, December 1951–January 1952
“The Monster in the Ice!” in *Vault of Horror* #22, December 1951–January 1952
“Grave Business!” in *Haunt of Fear* #10, November–December 1951
“A Tree Grows in Borneo!” in *Crime SuspenStories* #9, February–March 1952
“The Ventriloquist’s Dummy!” in *Tales From the Crypt* #28, February–March 1952
“Staired ... in Horror!” in *Vault of Horror* #23, February–March 1952

“The Rug!” in *Shock SuspenStories* #1, February–March 1952
“Ooze in the Cellar?” in *Haunt of Fear* #11, January–February 1952
“Friend to ‘Our Boys!’” in *Crime SuspenStories* #10, April–May 1952
“A Sucker for a Spider!” in *Tales From the Crypt* #29, April–May 1952
“... With All the Trappings!” in *Vault of Horror* #24, April–May 1952
“Halloween!” in *Shock SuspenStories* #2, April–May 1952
“Poetic Justice!” in *Haunt of Fear* #12, March–April 1952
“A Fool and His Honey Are Soon Parted!” in *Crime SuspenStories* #11, June–July 1952
“Mourning, Ambrose...” in *Tales From the Crypt* #30, June–July 1952
“Collection Completed!” in *Vault of Horror* #25, June–July 1952
“For the Love of Death!” in *Haunt of Fear* #13, May–June 1952
“Paralyzed!” in *Crime SuspenStories* #12, August–September 1952
“Buried Treasure!” in *Tales From the Crypt* #31, August–September 1952

GRAVE BUSINESS AND OTHER STORIES

ILLUSTRATED BY GRAHAM INGELS

WRITTEN BY AL FELDSTEIN

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS



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EDITOR'S NOTE

EC Comics did not publish writer credits and its master records no longer exist. Based on the best information available, we believe the creator credits above to be accurate. We welcome any corrections.



BILL MASON

THE QUINTESSENCE OF EC HORROR

George Evans was Graham Ingels's next-door neighbor on Long Island in the 1950s. In 1972, he looked back on his rather boozy friendship with Ingels when EC was going strong. "We used to spend a lot of time together and he would immediately crack out the beer or wine and we would sit and talk about everything."

"My family and I used to go over to Graham's for a barbecue once in a while, and before we started eating I would be so bleary from drinking that I wouldn't know what I was finally eating. And old Graham, he'd keep the drinks coming and coming. I'd try to knock off one while Graham would have finished two or three cans of beer, and he'd take a look at me and shake my can and say, 'You're not keeping up!' — and boy, what an effort to keep up!"

By mid-1951, Ingels had gone beyond his work for the pre-Trend Western and romance titles and developed a florid style that was ideally suited for character portrayal and period detail. We can see that style put to effective use in the first story in this collection, "Jury Duty" (p. 1, written by Al Feldstein), with its turreted courtyard and cobblestone lanes and alleys — and its memorable close-up of the murderer Peter Kardoff's face as he waits for the hangman to slip the noose around his neck.

Once we learn that Kardoff is still alive, Ingels has lots of fun with his broken neck and evil grin — he makes lawyer Barnes, Judge Sampson, and the members of the jury look like characters from a Hogarth engraving. The influence of the Edwardian illustrator Arthur Rackham (1867–1939) can be seen in the

silhouetted street on page 6, with its chimney pots and shop signs and a crescent moon barely visible in the evening sky.

Kardoff's campaign of murder and revenge comes to an end when he is dragged from his bed by the surviving jurors, put in a coffin, and buried, but not — Feldstein is at his cleverest here — buried alive.

"The Works ... in Wax!" (p. 8) is milder in tone but still gruesome, with gobbets of melting wax cascading from the Old Witch's pitcher, spilling down the head and right hand of a waxworks figure and coagulating into art-nouveau trickles at the bottom of the splash page. Waxworks proprietor Henri Mataud is a ranting bully whose gentle wife Marie — notice the spider adorning her necklace, perhaps a touch of gallows humor on Ingels's part — is always on the verge of tears. When Henri strangles Marie for altering the poses of his waxworks, his creations come to life and lay Marie out on a splendid catafalque that would do any funeral parlor proud. Henri's fate is shown in the final panel. Look closely, or you'll miss the poetic-justice ending.

OPPOSITE: Graham Ingels in the late 1970s, Florida. Photo by Debra Lott.

“Revenge Is the Nuts!” (p. 15) is a table-turned story, with the benighted Doctor Blackpool and his helpless patients as antagonists and Ingels cranking up his artwork to maximum intensity. The boy Tom Moulton, the giant Olaf, and kindly old Mr. Fortney are vivid and well-rounded characters. Ingels does the moisture-beaded cell walls and Olaf stretching on his chain as if no one had ever drawn a dungeon before. The escalating violence and terror of the last page, with its writhing forms and the inmates’ fiendish glee, is the quintessence of EC horror.

The mean and jealous Edward Garson and his bloodthirsty dogs make “Hounded to Death” (p. 22) one of EC’s scariest stories. The three-page love scene between Garson’s wife Ann and the tall and handsome Steven Baxter is masterfully staged and written. Rarely have sexual attraction and excitement been so powerfully expressed in a comics story. Ed’s sour, scowling face and Steve’s good-natured smile when Ed surprises Steven and Ann after their kiss are worth any number of pages of overheated prose. The molded table lamp and phallic candles on page 5 tactfully exceed the outer limits of 1951 comic book decorum. All that remains for the reader is the abrupt and shocking ending.

“Horror Under the Big-Top!” (p. 30) is a brilliantly contrived story, with pert-faced Wanda, human cannonball Carlo, and trapeze artist Aldar caught in a complicated love triangle. Ingels captures the circus atmosphere with telling details: the wild-eyed ringmaster, the grinning audience, a dramatic drum roll to introduce Aldar, Carlo showing off to the audience as he goes into his act. The ending is ingenious



and unexpected, and well worth the price of a bag of popcorn and an ice cream cone.

“Political Pull” (p. 37) combines Victorian décor and New England fishing-village atmospherics to introduce kindly and virtuous Mayor Jed Fulton and sly old rascal Cyrus Mangate. Jed and Cyrus’s shared luncheon is interrupted by Cyrus’s furious outburst and Jed’s agonizing death, both memorably dramatized by Ingels.

Cyrus is a consistent character. We see him angrily holding forth in the village tavern and — after he becomes mayor — renting a rowboat from snaggle-toothed Clem for a day’s fishing. Out on the water, he loses his oars and is undone by his impatience and sheer cussedness. The ending is as briny and blustery as anyone could wish.

“Warts So Horrible?” (p. 44) is based on the graveyard scene in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), with a dash of the pre-Trend retribution story “Demons of Death” (*War Against Crime* #11, art by George Roussos; not in this volume). Ingels works up plenty of antebellum Southern atmosphere — weeping willows, marsh grass, a circular tree-seat, the old Hermit’s rickety shack — and creates a memorable cast of characters: Titus and his no-account nephews; Chuck and Rudy (based on Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn); and the Hermit, a pop-eyed swamp sprite with a beard that looks like a clump of Spanish moss. Everything is vividly realized, and Ingels’s portrayal of the two boys is, in its own way, almost as good as Mark Twain’s portrayal of Tom and Huck.

“Partnership Dissolved!” (p. 52) is an example of Al Feldstein at his cleverest and most inventive. We get a guided tour of the meat wholesaling business, including a demonstration of how meat was broiled on an office desk-top in the days before microwave ovens. Plump Herman and gawky Doc are perfect foils for each other, and Doc slipping on the throw rug is a perfect set-up for the horrifying final panel and Miss Stone’s cathartic scream.

“Horror! Head ... It Off!” (p. 59) is Ingels and Feldstein’s big one about the Reign of Terror. Starring the glassy-eyed Marquis de Rochemont, the slyly intense Louis, and the fat and epicene Duc de Lugère, it combines the excitement of an old-time radio play with the atmosphere of 1790s Paris as only Ingels could render it. The headless Marquis dragging



his clubfoot as Louis guides him to wreak vengeance on Lugère is the stuff of nightmare-provoking campfire tales.

“The Monster in the Ice!” (p. 66) gives Ingels a chance to reduce the Inuit guide Lomo from nervous apprehension to babbling imbecility. The invention of a sufficiently grotesque visual for Frankenstein’s monster has put horror artists on their mettle ever since Jack Pierce (1889–1968) created Boris Karloff’s “flat-face” mask for the 1931 James Whale film *Frankenstein*. Ingels’s depiction of the monster’s face in two consecutive panels on page 7 is probably the closest any artist could come to creating a face guaranteed to drive anyone who sees it insane. Ingels was a prime influence on the artist Bernie Wrightson, co-creator of Swamp Thing, who spent seven years illustrating Mary Shelley’s novel (1831 edition). Wrightson called it “a labor of love.” It was initially published by Marvel in 1983. (Dark Horse Comics released a 25th anniversary edition in 2008.)

“Grave Business!” (p. 73), the title story of this collection and the first story in which Ingels signed himself “Ghastly” in trembly letters, anticipates *The American Way of Death* (1963), Jessica Mitford’s famous study of the U.S. funeral industry, by a dozen years. Smooth-talking funeral director Ezra Cooper is an

engaging villain until halfway through the story, when he finds himself paralyzed and unable to speak. Feldstein’s inspiration was probably Louis Pollock’s 1947 story “Breakdown,” in which the protagonist is a ruthless businessman who tries desperately but without success to communicate his predicament to the outside world. In 1955 Pollack adapted “Breakdown” as the seventh episode of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, starring Joseph Cotten as the businessman and directed by Hitchcock. Feldstein and Ingels had an especially good time with the backslapping gallows humor at the undertakers’ convention on page 4.

In “A Tree Grows in Borneo!” (p. 81) timid George and greedy Amos are temple-robbing explorers in Borneo, still part of the Dutch East Indies in 1951. As the story progresses, Amos becomes increasingly hysteria-prone and terrifying. The climax is the close-up panel of Amos’s moment of decision on page 5. The “revenge of the weeping willow” scene, which could almost be the ending of a story from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, follows two pages later, but Ingels and Feldstein were not yet ready to show Amos being torn to pieces, so we get a written description and a reaction shot instead.

“The Ventriloquist’s Dummy!” (p. 88) is a reworking of “The Hunchback!” (not in this

volume, but also illustrated by Ingels and plotted and scripted by Gaines and Feldstein). In “The Ventriloquist’s Dummy!” Charles Jerome’s “dummy hand” sprouts a loathsome little head, and horrible consequences ensue. Ingels provides unforgettable visuals for the grim-faced Jerome and his dummy Morty, especially the panel on page 4 in which Morty winks and leers at a woman in the audience.

“Staired ... in Horror!” (p. 95) uses several recurring EC motifs: the abandoned lighthouse with a spiral staircase and plenty of noir atmosphere; the predatory Irma, a classic EC femme fatale; and Robert, rich and still grieving for his first wife. Feldstein adds novelistic flourishes, like Robert’s despairing dash into a thunderstorm in the middle of the story and Irma’s obsessive sealing of the upper stories of Robert’s mansion. The floridly written poetic-justice ending settles every score in this well-made story and reads like a preview of the Feldstein/Ingels classic “Horror We? How’s Bayou?” (*Sucker Bait And Other Stories*, Fantagraphics Books, 2014).

“The Rug!” (p. 102) is a hunting story with a switch ending that borders on self-parody. The hearty bully Conrad and his finicky friend Reggie are instantly recognizable types, and the bear-shaped andirons preside over the story like tutelary deities. Conrad’s encounter with an enraged grizzly, culminating in the wide final panel, is an unexpected moment of genuine horror.

Anyone who has known a junk hoarder will recognize Silas Thornton, the crabby old protagonist of “Ooze in the Cellar?” (p. 109), and his long-suffering wife, Emily. Ingels’s detailed inventory of the cellar junk fusing together, coming to life, surging and bubbling, and taking over the Thornton house is sensuous and unforgettable: we can almost smell the dead cat and those spoiled apple preserves.

“Friend to ‘Our Boys!’” (p. 117) is a topical preachie about the housing shortage near U.S. military bases in the years after World War II and the rent-gouging landlords who seized upon that situation to keep tenants at their mercy. Barry, Eve, and Junior are an attractive young family, and Barry’s landlord, Edgar Chambers, is an especially hateful villain. Feldstein keeps Barry and Eva’s need to protect Junior from rats as a looming terror throughout

the story while Ingels makes the rats, scuttling about the edges of the panels, seem about to invade the story proper and attack the innocent family. The ending is as satisfying and poetically right as anyone could wish. Note the soldier at the USO club enthralled by his copy of *The Haunt of Fear*.

In “A Sucker for a Spider!” (p. 124) Graham Ingels takes obvious relish in his portraits of small-town banker Max Stoneman and his chief teller Randolph Spurd. Ingels’s spiderwebs and cocoons are convincingly silky and sticky, and Spurd’s pop-eyed grin when he realizes that Stoneman is in his power is the best moment in the story.

“...With All the Trappings!” (p. 131) is the closest EC ever came to capturing the mood of the 1971 Canadian film *Mon Oncle Antoine* (directed by Claude Jutra), a harrowing depiction of French-Canadian isolation and poverty set in 1940s rural Quebec. Wizen old Pierre Duval is obsessed with buying a metal burial vault to protect his wife Maria’s body from the “grave-crawlers.” But a horrible surprise awaits him when he spends the money from his winter’s trapping to have the vault installed. Henri, the gesticulating undertaker in the settlement who is a friend and confidant of Pierre, tries to be helpful but to no avail.

“Halloween!” (p. 138) is a return to the Dickensian nightmare atmosphere of “Revenge Is the Nuts!”, with gentle Miss Dennis, sweaty Mr. Critchit, and a chorus of vengeful orphans who seem to have appeared out of a Hammer Films horror feature of the late 1950s. The full-bore expressionist splash panel and the morbid humor of the ending are genuinely horrific and cheekily self-parodic at the same time.

“Poetic Justice!” (p. 145) combines goeey sentiment (loveable old Abner Elliot fixing up broken toys for poor kids) with base villainy (father-and-son Henry and Harold Burgundy chuckling with delight at their cruelty) — and acid satire of small-town life worthy of painters Grant Wood (1891–1942) and Paul Cadmus (1904–1999). It all culminates in the valentine sent to Henry Burgundy, an ancient sick joke brought off in the final panel with Feldstein’s usual aplomb. “Poetic Justice!” was one of five stories adapted for the 1972 *Tales From the Crypt* movie. The characters’ names were changed for the film, directed by Freddie Francis, but David

Markham plays the father, Robin Phillips plays the son, and Peter Cushing plays the Abner Elliot role.

“A Fool and His Honey Are Soon Parted!” (p. 153) is a jungle romance loosely based on the pre-Code Hollywood film *Red Dust* (1932, directed by Victor Fleming). Ingels brings to life the Gallic cast of characters — doll-faced Nanette, Gilbert Roland-ish Rudy, and *trop sérieux* husband Charles — with an ethnic dash and flair worthy of John Severin, as we can see from Rudy’s lustful gaze and the sultry face of the chief’s daughter at the top of page 5.

“Mournin’, Ambrose...” (p. 160) is a tantalizing character study: Ambrose Hawley is sometimes weepy and simpering and sometimes testy and fierce, and the Victorian splendor of Hawley Manor is the perfect setting for Andrew’s early-1900s collegiate clothes and Aunt Elsa’s old-lady fearfulness. Ingels was never more nuanced in his panel-to-panel depiction of facial expressions and gestures. The final revelation, accompanied by a spray of roses, is genuinely shocking.

“Collection Completed!” (p. 167) has always been one of my favorite EC revenge stories. Jonah is a sadistic buffoon, Anita is sweet and kind, and Mew-Mew’s postmortem grin is the stuff of which classics are made.

“For the Love of Death!” (p. 174) is a switch on the Ray Bradbury story “The Handler” (*Sucker Bait And Other Stories*), about an undertaker who embalms his clients in ways appropriate to the sins they committed in life. Feldstein’s protagonist is the baby-faced Morton Macawber, who never misses an obituary page and is not above murdering old Phineas and defacing his corpse to guarantee that the funeral will be closed-coffin. Morton takes Phineas’s place in the coffin and savors every detail of the funeral rites — until we get to the last panel and a sudden shift in point of view.

“Paralyzed” (p. 182) is an unsparing portrait of Gladys and Ernest Hewton, “still acting like lovebirds after twenty years” in the eyes of the world, and their joyless marriage. Ernest acts the part of a noble and caring husband after Gladys is paralyzed in a car accident, but they soon revert to type and their lovelessness turns to frank hatred. The scene in which Ernest gives the terrified Gladys a handgun and slinks off to the movies with a cigarette dangling from his

mouth represents the nadir of their marriage. Few EC stories are so illusionless, and the accidental fire with which “Paralyzed” ends almost burns us with its clarity and bitterness. Is there a kernel of autobiographical truth beneath the surface? No one knows any more, but Ingels and Feldstein are both at the top of their form.

“Buried Treasure!” (p. 189) is almost a fore-runner of “A Grim Fairy Tale” (*Sucker Bait And Other Stories*). We are back in 17th-century Germany and the angry peasants, some of whom can read, look more and more like the Paris mob in “Horror! Head ... It Off!”. The fat Duke Heinrich gets his just desserts at the end, but he comes close to being too silly to take seriously. Close, but not quite.

Evans gave his Ingels anecdote an ending that might have seemed more innocent for those times, but strikes a more disturbing note today: “I remember one time when we were over there and my daughter Janis, who was 5 at the time, wanted something to drink. Well, naturally, all that Graham had was beer, so Janis came over to me and had a sip of beer, but when I wouldn’t let her have any more she went over to Graham. So Graham and Janis started splitting bottles until they got all boozed up and she fell asleep in his lap. It was such a picture — here was Ghastly Graham with this little kid huddled up in his lap with a big smile on her face and a big smile on Graham’s face, and he’s saying, ‘She’s a cute kid’.”

BILL MASON teaches in the humanities department at Dawson College, Montreal, Canada. He has been writing about comics since 1954, when he had a letter published in *Weird Science-Fantasy* #27.





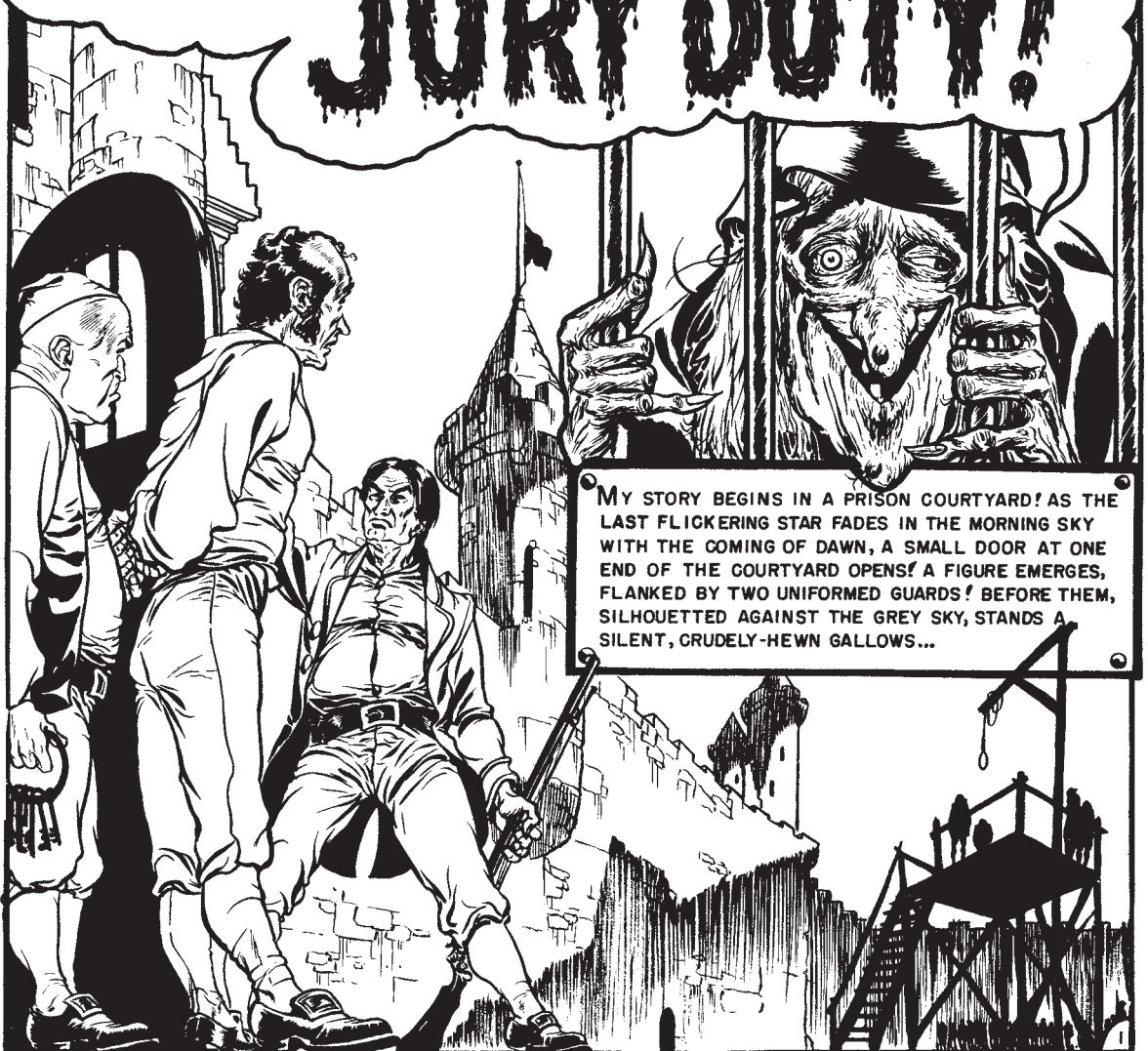




THE HAUNT OF FEAR

HEE, HEE! WELL, BUBBLE MY CAULDRON! I SEE IT'S TIME FOR ME TO DO ANOTHER 'GUEST-SPOT'! SO HERE GOES! YEP! IT'S *ME* AGAIN! *THE OLD WITCH*, MISTRESS OF *THE HAUNT OF FEAR*! THIS TIME I HAVE A CHILLING LITTLE TALE COOKING, A TALE OF LEGAL ENTANGLEMENTS THAT FINALLY GET... AHEM... STRAIGHTENED OUT! I CALL THIS TEMPTING LITTLE DISH...

JURY DUTY!



MY STORY BEGINS IN A PRISON COURTYARD! AS THE LAST FLICKERING STAR FADES IN THE MORNING SKY WITH THE COMING OF DAWN, A SMALL DOOR AT ONE END OF THE COURTYARD OPENS! A FIGURE EMERGES, FLANKED BY TWO UNIFORMED GUARDS! BEFORE THEM, SILHOUETTED AGAINST THE GREY SKY, STANDS A SILENT, CRUDELY-HEWN GALLOWES...

SLOWLY, HESITANTLY, THE CONDEMNED MAN APPROACHES THE LETHAL STRUCTURE, PRODDED ONWARD BY THE TWO GUARDS...

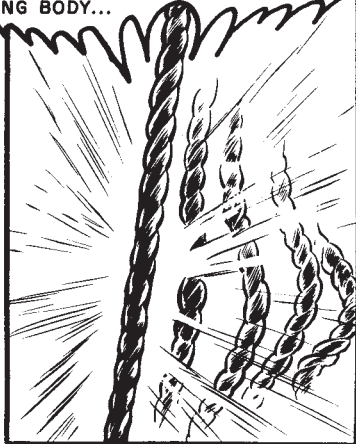
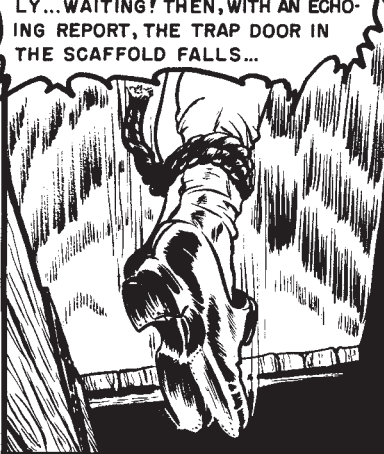
THE HANGMAN ON THE SCAFFOLD WATCHES, GRIM-FACED, AS THE PRISONER MOUNTS THE STAIRS! AT A SIGNAL FROM THE PRISON WARDEN, THE HANGMAN STEPS FORWARD AND CAREFULLY BLINDFOLDS THE DOOMED MAN...



THE HEAVY ROPE WITH ITS TRADITIONAL THIRTEEN COILS IS SLIPPED AROUND HIS NECK...

THERE IS A MOMENT OF SILENCE AS THE CONDEMNED MAN STANDS STIFFLY... WAITING! THEN, WITH AN ECHOING REPORT, THE TRAP DOOR IN THE SCAFFOLD FALLS...

THE ROPE SUDDENLY TIGHTENS UNDER THE WEIGHT OF THE PLUNGING BODY...



SOON, ALL THAT MARS THE SILENCE OF THE PRISON YARD IS THE CREAKING OF THE ROPE, AS THE BODY OF THE HANGED MAN SWAYS IN THE BRISK MORNING BREEZE...

THE ROPE IS CUT, AND THE BODY DROPS WITH A DULL THUD TO THE STONE FLOOR OF THE COURT! THE DOCTOR STEPS FORWARD... BRIEFLY EXAMINES THE EXECUTED PRISONER... AND ANNOUNCES...

ALL RIGHT! YOU CAN CUT HIM DOWN NOW! DOG? WILL YOU...?

YES!

I PRONOUNCE THIS MAN DEAD!

ALL RIGHT, GUARD! IF THERE'S ANYONE HERE TO CLAIM HIS BODY, THEY MAY DO SO!

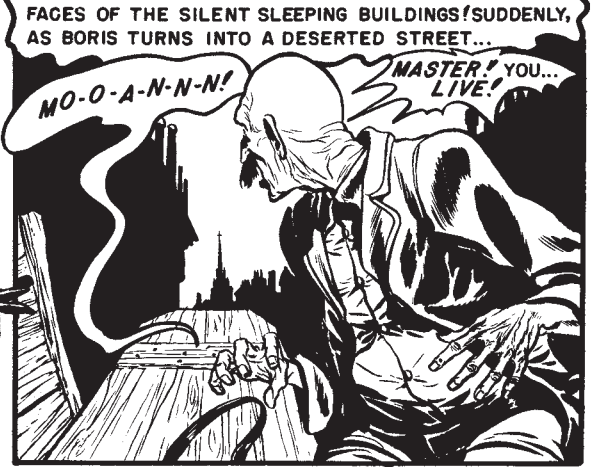


PETER KARDOFF'S BODY IS PLACED IN A PINE BOX AND LIFTED ONTO A GART! HIS FAITHFUL SERVANT, BORIS, HAULS IT AWAY...



YOUR GRAVE IS WAITING, MASTER! ALL NIGHT I HAVE DUG...AND NOW...IT WAITS!

THE WHEELS OF THE GART CLATTER DOWN THE GOBBLESTONE STREETS! THE DIN ECHOES FROM THE FACES OF THE SILENT SLEEPING BUILDINGS! SUDDENLY, AS BORIS TURNS INTO A DESERTED STREET...



MO-O-A-N-N-N!

MASTER! YOU... LIVE!

WELL! HEE, HEE! THAT'S A GRUESOME ENOUGH BEGINNING, ISN'T IT? **PETER KARDOFF**, CONDEMNED MURDERER, IS **HANGED!** THE DOCTOR PRONOUNCES HIM **DEAD!** HIS FAITHFUL SERVANT, **BORIS**, CLAIMS HIS BODY FOR **BURIAL!** AND... AS HE CARTS THE CORPSE THROUGH THE DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT...HE HEARS A **MOAN!** NICE? WELL, **GO ON!** YOU AIN'T SEEN **NUTHIN'**, YET!



ABOUT TWO MONTHS LATER, FELIX BARNES, KARDOFF'S DEFENSE LAWYER, RECEIVES A VISITOR...



BORIS! HOW ARE YOU?

YOU COME... WITH ME!

BARNES FOLLOWS BORIS THROUGH DARKENED STREETS TO PETER KARDOFF'S HOUSE...



WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT, BORIS?

YOU... SEE!

BORIS UNLOCKS THE SQUEAKY, BATTERED DOOR AND USHERS FELIX BARNES INTO THE HOUSE! HE LEADS HIM UP COB-WEBBED STAIRS...



MASTER...WAITS FOR YOU...IN HERE!

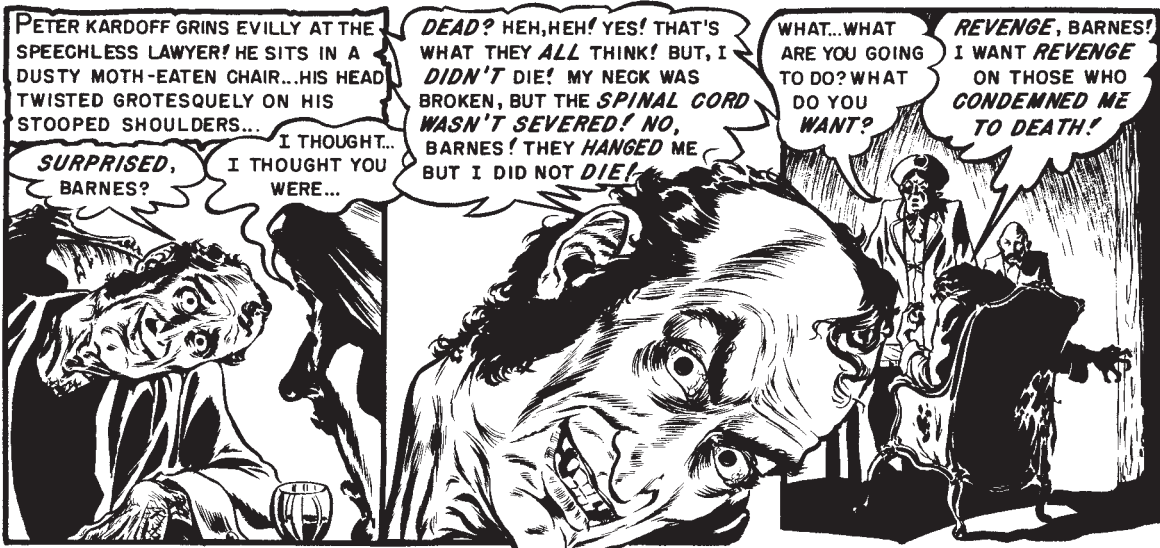
YOUR **MASTER?** WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? KARDOFF WAS **HANGED** TWO MONTHS AGO!

BORIS STEPS ASIDE AND BARNES ENTERS THE DIMLY LIT ROOM! SUDDENLY, HIS EYES OPEN WIDE! HE STARES DUMBFOUNDED AT...



KARDOFF! YOU...YOU...

YES, FELIX! I AM **ALIVE!**



PETER KARDOFF GRINS EVILLY AT THE SPEECHLESS LAWYER! HE SITS IN A DUSTY MOTH-EATEN CHAIR...HIS HEAD TWISTED GROTESQUELY ON HIS STOOPED SHOULDERS...

DEAD? HEH,HEH! YES! THAT'S WHAT THEY ALL THINK! BUT, I DIDN'T DIE! MY NECK WAS BROKEN, BUT THE SPINAL CORD WASN'T SEVERED! NO, BARNES! THEY HANGED ME BUT I DID NOT DIE!

WHAT...WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?WHAT DO YOU WANT?

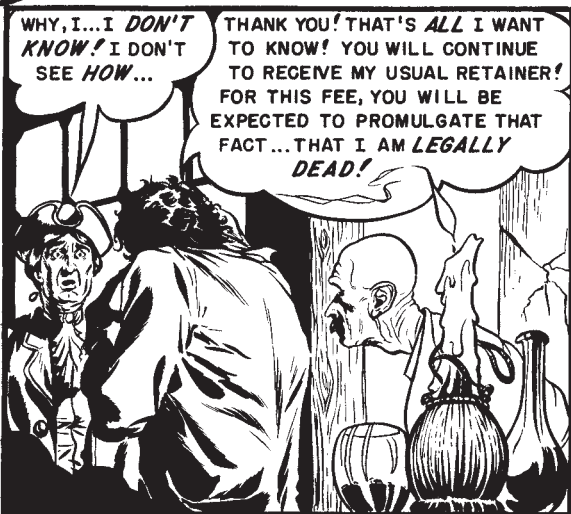
REVENGE, BARNES! I WANT REVENGE ON THOSE WHO CONDEMNED ME TO DEATH!

SURPRISED, BARNES? I THOUGHT... I THOUGHT YOU WERE...



YOU'RE MAD, KARDOFF! THEY'LL HANG YOU AGAIN!

CAN THEY, MY FINE LAWYER FRIEND? CAN THEY EXECUTE A MAN WHO HAS BEEN DECLARED LEGALLY DEAD?



WHY, I...I DON'T KNOW! I DON'T SEE HOW...

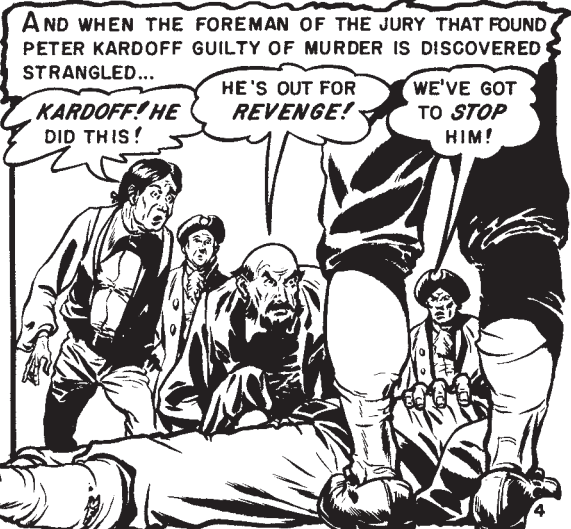
THANK YOU! THAT'S ALL I WANT TO KNOW! YOU WILL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE MY USUAL RETAINER! FOR THIS FEE, YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO PROMULGATE THAT FACT...THAT I AM LEGALLY DEAD!



AND SO, WHEN PETER KARDOFF REAPPEARS ONCE MORE ON THE STREETS OF THE TOWN...

KARDOFF! IT'S HIS GHOST!

NO! HE'S ALIVE! LOOK AT HIS NECK...



AND WHEN THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY THAT FOUND PETER KARDOFF GUILTY OF MURDER IS DISCOVERED STRANGLERED...

KARDOFF! HE DID THIS!

HE'S OUT FOR REVENGE!

WE'VE GOT TO STOP HIM!

A FRIGHTENED GROUP OF CITIZENS GROWS THE CHAMBER OF JUDGE LEMUEL SAMPSON THE MORNING AFTER THE MURDER...

IT'S KARDOFF! HE KILLED JOHNSON! NONE OF US ARE SAFE! HE'S OUT TO GET EACH OF US WHO SAT ON THE JURY!

WE'VE GOT TO HANG HIM AGAIN! WE'VE GOT TO DO THE JOB RIGHT THIS TIME!

WAIT! YOU CAN'T!

IT IS FELIX BARNES WHO PUSHES HIS WAY THROUGH THE ANGRY CROWD TO FACE JUDGE SAMPSON...

YOU CANNOT EXECUTE THIS MAN AGAIN! YOU CANNOT DO ANYTHING TO HIM! THIS MAN IS LEGALLY DEAD! HE DOES NOT EXIST IN THE EYES OF THE LAW!

PREPOSTEROUS! THAT'S RIDICULOUS! HE...

GENTLEMEN! GENTLEMEN!

JUDGE SAMPSON SHAKES HIS HEAD, SADLY...

LAWYER BARNES IS RIGHT, GENTLEMEN! I SENTENCED KARDOFF TO BE HANGED BY THE NECK UNTIL PRONOUNCED DEAD! THE SENTENCE HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT! THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO...

WHAT? WE'LL ALL BE MURDERED! IT'S...IT'S CRAZY!

WHEN THE SECOND JUROR IS FOUND... STRANGLERED...

BOY! I'D HATE TO BE ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF KARDOFF'S JURY!

IT AIN'T RIGHT! THEY OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING!

ONE NIGHT... BARNES! I DIDN'T SEND FOR YOU!

YOU'VE GOT TO STOP THIS MADNESS, KARDOFF!

NOBODY ASKED YOU! I'LL DO WHAT I WANT! AND YOU'LL DO WHAT I SAY!

I'M SORRY, KARDOFF! I'M THROUGH!

THROUGH? WHY YOU...

I WON'T HAVE ANY PART OF THIS... THIS MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE!

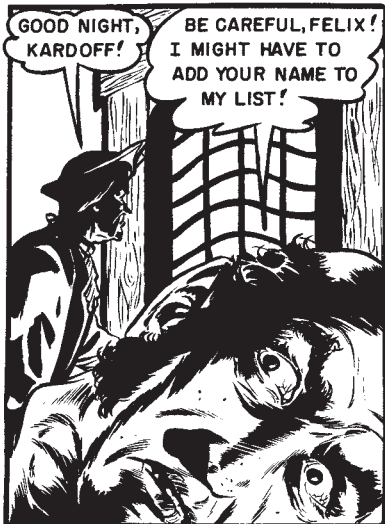


AND IF THERE'S ANY MORE KILLING, KARDOFF, I'LL...I'LL FIGHT YOU! I'LL FIGHT YOU WITH EVERY MEANS AT MY COMMAND!



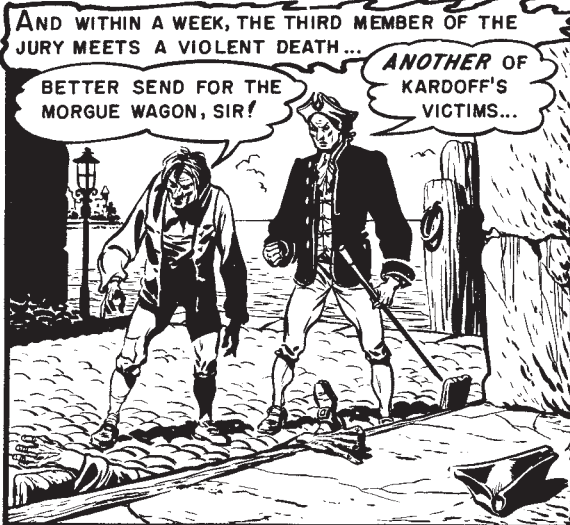
HAH! YOU'LL FIGHT ME? LEGALLY?

YES, KARDOFF! LEGALLY!



GOOD NIGHT, KARDOFF!

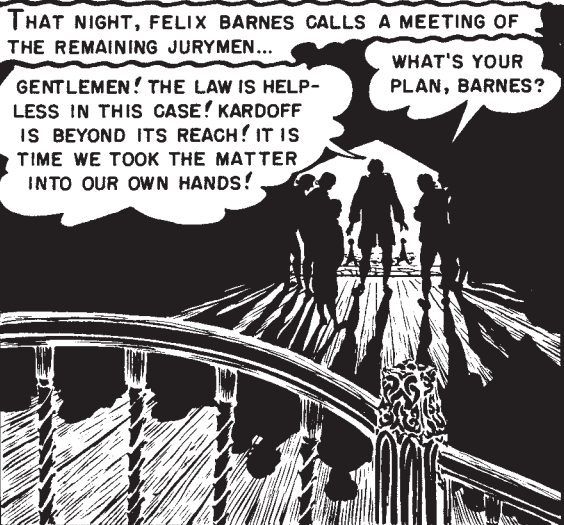
BE CAREFUL, FELIX! I MIGHT HAVE TO ADD YOUR NAME TO MY LIST!



AND WITHIN A WEEK, THE THIRD MEMBER OF THE JURY MEETS A VIOLENT DEATH...

BETTER SEND FOR THE MORGUE WAGON, SIR!

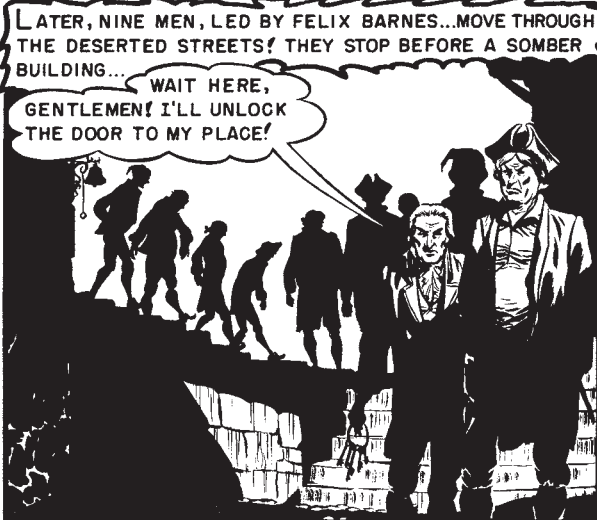
ANOTHER OF KARDOFF'S VICTIMS...



THAT NIGHT, FELIX BARNES CALLS A MEETING OF THE REMAINING JURYMEN...

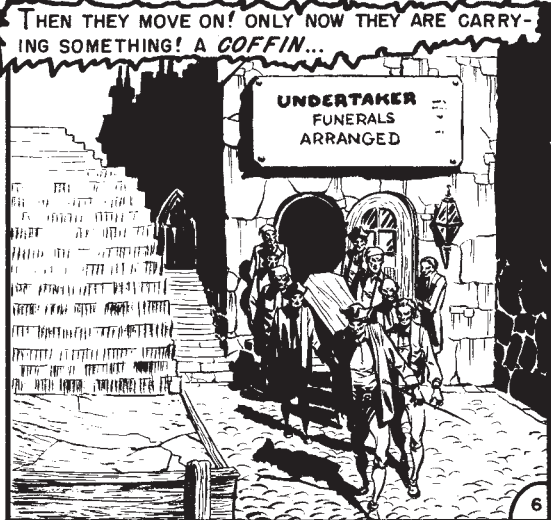
GENTLEMEN! THE LAW IS HELPLESS IN THIS CASE! KARDOFF IS BEYOND ITS REACH! IT IS TIME WE TOOK THE MATTER INTO OUR OWN HANDS!

WHAT'S YOUR PLAN, BARNES?



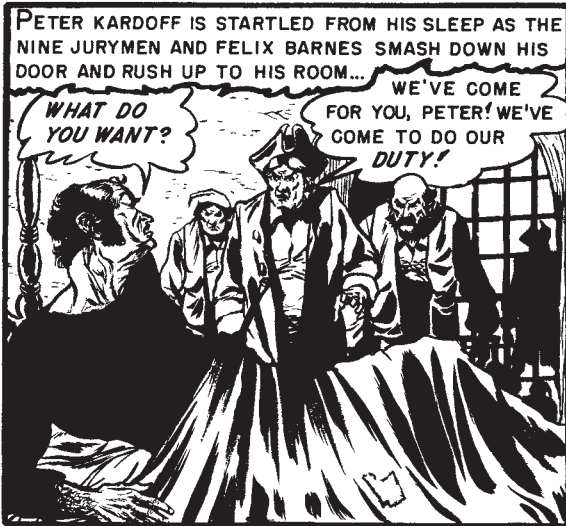
LATER, NINE MEN, LED BY FELIX BARNES...MOVE THROUGH THE DESERTED STREETS! THEY STOP BEFORE A SOMBER BUILDING...

WAIT HERE, GENTLEMEN! I'LL UNLOCK THE DOOR TO MY PLACE!



THEN THEY MOVE ON! ONLY NOW THEY ARE CARRYING SOMETHING! A COFFIN...

UNDERTAKER FUNERALS ARRANGED



PETER KARDOFF IS STARTLED FROM HIS SLEEP AS THE NINE JURYMEN AND FELIX BARNES SMASH DOWN HIS DOOR AND RUSH UP TO HIS ROOM...

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

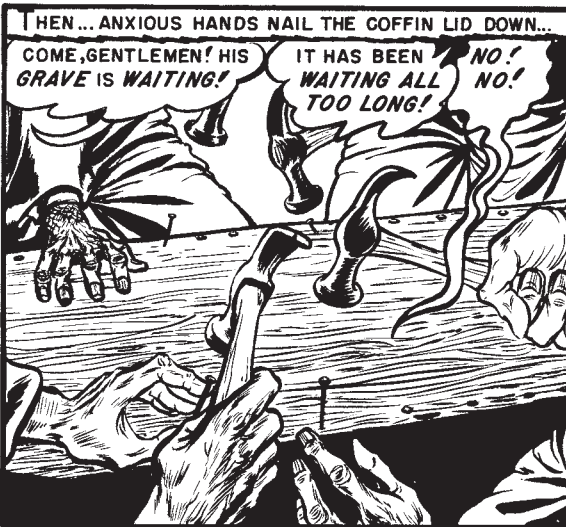
WE'VE COME FOR YOU, PETER! WE'VE COME TO DO OUR DUTY!



THEY SEIZE THE STRUGGLING, SCREAMING PETER KARDOFF AND FORCE HIM INTO THE COFFIN...

NO! YOU CAN'T DO THIS... IT'S MURDER! MURDER!

NO, PETER! YOU'RE WRONG!

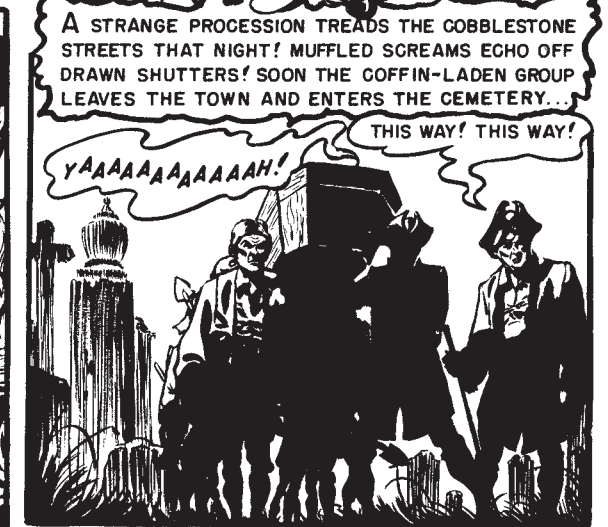


THEN... ANXIOUS HANDS NAIL THE COFFIN LID DOWN...

COME, GENTLEMEN! HIS GRAVE IS WAITING!

IT HAS BEEN WAITING ALL TOO LONG!

NO! NO!



A STRANGE PROCESSION TREADS THE COBBLESTONE STREETS THAT NIGHT! MUFFLED SCREAMS ECHO OFF DRAWN SHUTTERS! SOON THE COFFIN-LADEN GROUP LEAVES THE TOWN AND ENTERS THE CEMETERY...

THIS WAY! THIS WAY!

YAAAAAAAHH!



THE COFFIN IS DROPPED INTO THE THREE-MONTH OLD, RAIN-SOAKED GRAVE! THEN THE PILE OF DIRT IS SPADED IN...

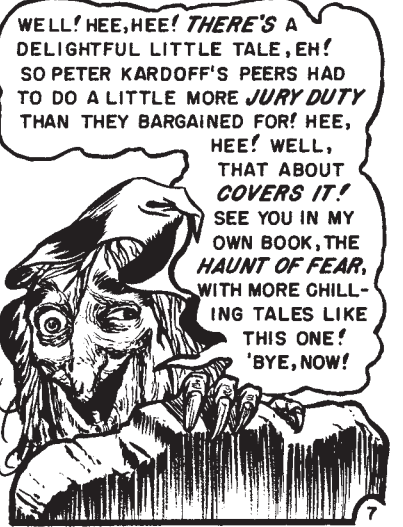
YOU'LL HANG FOR THIS! IT'S MURDER...

NO, PETER! WE WON'T HANG!



SOON THE DIRT ALMOST FILLS THE GAPING BLACK HOLE...

YOU'RE DEAD PETER! DEAD! THEY CAN'T PUNISH US FOR BURYING A DEAD MAN!



WELL! HEE, HEE! THERE'S A DELIGHTFUL LITTLE TALE, EH! SO PETER KARDOFF'S PEERS HAD TO DO A LITTLE MORE JURY DUTY THAN THEY BARGAINED FOR! HEE, HEE!

WELL, THAT ABOUT COVERS IT! SEE YOU IN MY OWN BOOK, THE HAUNT OF FEAR, WITH MORE CHILLING TALES LIKE THIS ONE! 'BYE, NOW!

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

AH! YOU'RE BACK! SO YOU LIKE THE LITTLE TIDBITS OF *TERROR* I DISH OUT OF MY *CAULDRON*, EH? WELL, COME IN! COME IN! DON'T JUST STAND THERE GAPING! IT'S *ME, THE OLD WITCH*... MISTRESS OF *THE HAUNT OF FEAR*! COME CLOSER TO THE FIRE... WHERE IT'S *WARM*! THEN WHEN YOU *SHIVER* FROM THE STORY I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU, I'LL *KNOW* IT *ISN'T* FROM THE *GOLD*! COMFY? GOOD! THEN I'LL BEGIN! THIS IS A TALE *DRIPPING* WITH *DREAD*! I CALL IT.....

THE WORKS...IN WAX!



MY STORY BEGINS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY... IN ENGLAND! ON A DARK AND WINDING STREET IN OLD LONDON STANDS A FAMOUS STRUCTURE... THE *HOGS LANE WAX MUSEUM*! INSIDE, THE OWNER BARKS ORDERS AT HIS NERVOUS, SCURRYING WIFE...

HURRY, MARIE! IT IS TIME TO OPEN UP!
ARE ALL THE TABLEAUS *DUSTED?*

YES, HENRI! I AM FINISHED! YOU MAY UNLOCK THE DOORS!

THE FAME OF THE HOGS LANE WAXWORKS IS WIDESPREAD! OUTSIDE THE BATTERED DOORS, A CROWD HAS ALREADY GATHERED! TOURISTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD TRAVEL TO SEE THIS FAMOUS MUSEUM... AND ITS NOTORIOUS *CHAMBER OF HORRORS!*



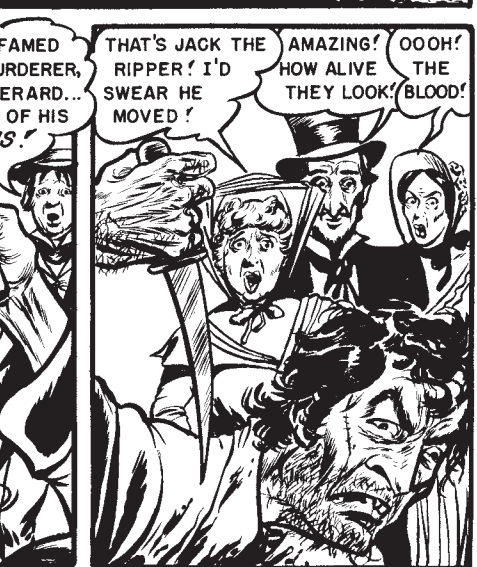
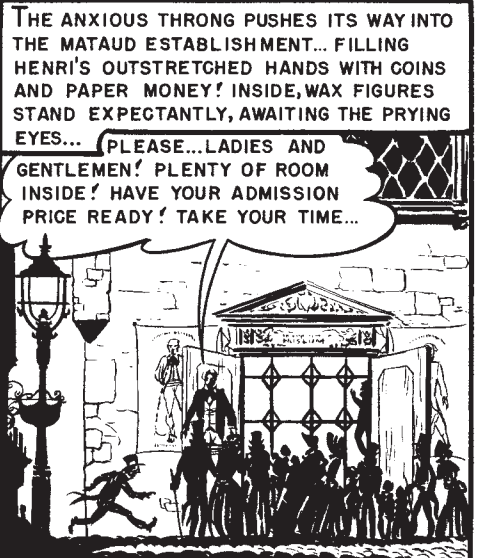
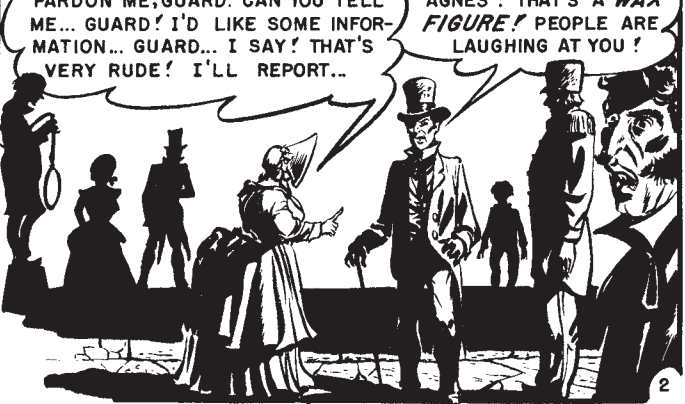
YES! MARIE AND HENRI MATAUD'S WAXWORKS IS WORLD RENOWNED! Y'KNOW *WHY?* BECAUSE THE WAX FIGURES LOOK SO *REAL!* THEY... THEY LOOK ALMOST *ALIVE!* AND IN THE *CHAMBER OF HORRORS...* WELL... *YOU CAN IMAGINE...*



LOOK AT HER FACE... SHE ACTUALLY LOOKS LIKE SHE'S BEING STRANGLER! THAT'S JOHN GARROTE! HE STRANGLER THIRTY-THREE WOMEN BEFORE THEY CAUGHT HIM...



YES! THE MATAUD WAXWORKS IS QUITE A PLACE... QUITE A PLACE..



SOON, HOWEVER, THE DAY PASSES, AND CLOSING TIME ARRIVES! THE MILLING THROG IS USHERED OUT, AND ONCE MORE THE DOORS ARE CLOSED! HENRI MATAUD BREATHES A SIGH OF RELIEF...

WHEW! WELL, MARIE! ANOTHER DAY, EH? IT IS A RELIEF TO HAVE *SILENCE* AGAIN, IS IT NOT?

YES, HENRI! I WILL DRAPE THE TABLEAUS WHILE YOU COUNT THE DAY'S RECEIPTS!



HENRI DISAPPEARS INTO THE OFFICE AND MARIE TURNS TO THE MANY WAX FIGURES THAT LINE THE WALLS...

WELL! TODAY WAS NOT SO BAD, WAS IT, MY FRIENDS? AT LEAST THERE WERE NO MISCHIEVOUS CHILDREN, EH?



AFTER A WHILE, HENRI COMES OUT OF THE OFFICE AND CALLS TO MARIE...

THE *BEST TUESDAY* WE HAVE HAD *THIS YEAR*, MARIE!

MARIE? MARIE!



HENRI CALLS MARIE'S NAME SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE SHE RUSHES UP TO HIM...

MARIE! DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME CALL YOU?

I... I'M SORRY, HENRI! I WAS... BUSY!



HENRI STAMPS DOWN THE LINE OF EXHIBITS...

BUSY? BUSY DOING *WHAT?* YOU HAVE NOT DRAPED THE FIGURES! YOU...



SUDDENLY HIS EYES FALL UPON THE EXHIBIT OF JOHN GARROTE, THE STRANGLER...

MON DIEU! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE! HIS *HEAD!* YOU *TURNED HIS HEAD!*

YES, HENRI! I FELT *SORRY* FOR HIM!



SORRY? *SORRY?* WHAT ARE YOU *TALKING* ABOUT?

HE *BEGGED* ME TO DO IT! HE SAID HE *GOULDN'T STAND* LOOKING AT HER *EYES...*





MARIE! YOU ARE OUT OF YOUR MIND!

NO, HENRI! NO! MONSIEUR GARROTE PLEADED WITH ME...



HENRI TWISTS THE WAXEN HEAD SO IT ONCE MORE STARES DOWN AT THE STRANGLED GIRL...

MARIE! LEAVE THE FIGURES ALONE!

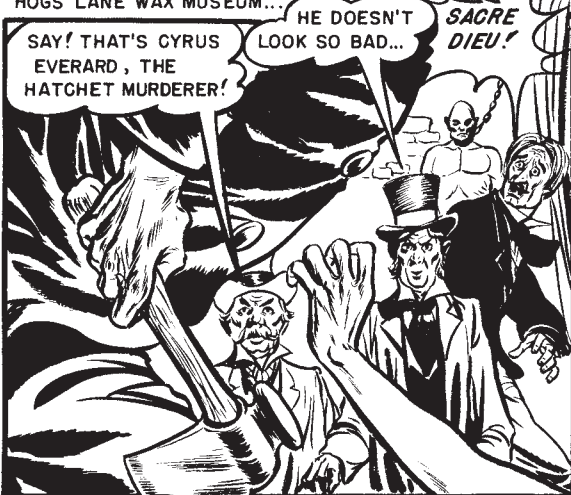
NO, HENRI! DON'T!



THEN HENRI LEADS MARIE AWAY... YOU... HAVE BEEN WORKING TOO HARD, MARIE! YOU NEED A REST!

I'M NOT TIRED, HENRI! I AM ALL RIGHT!

THE NEXT DAY, CROWDS ONCE MORE FLOCK TO THE HOGS LANE WAX MUSEUM...



SAY! THAT'S CYRUS EVERARD, THE HATCHET MURDERER!

HE DOESN'T LOOK SO BAD...

SACRE DIEU!



AFTER THE LAST VISITOR LEAVES...

MARIE! COME HERE!

YES, HENRI?



MARIE! DID YOU LOWER MONSIEUR EVERARD'S ARM TO HIS SIDE?

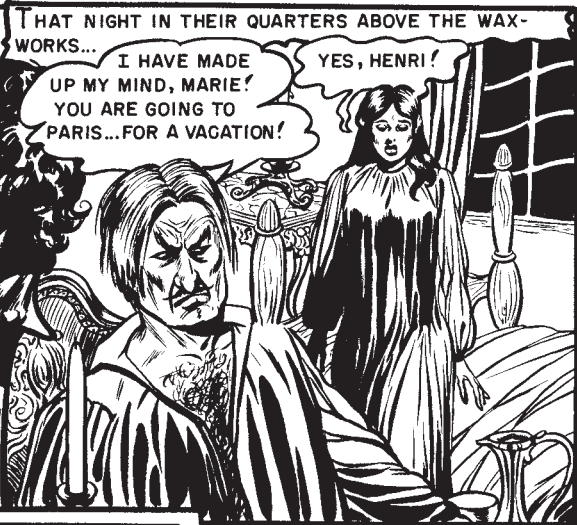
OUI, HENRI! HE WAS SO TIRED! THE HATCHET IS...SO HEAVY! I FELT... SORRY FOR HIM!

MARIE! WHAT IS HAPPENING TO YOU? YOU ARE GOING MAD!

NO, HENRI! IT IS TRUE! MONSIEUR EVERARD ASKED ME...NO, BEGGED ME... TO LOWER HIS ARM! I COULD NOT REFUSE! HE...



AND AS HENRI STORMS FROM THE CHAMBER OF HORRORS...



LATER THAT NIGHT, HENRI IS AWAKENED BY THE SOUND OF LAUGHTER... MARIE'S LAUGHTER...



HENRI PUTS ON A ROBE AND DESCENDS TO THE WAXWORKS BELOW...



HENRI'S VOICE ECHOES THROUGH THE SILENT WAX MUSEUM! HE LIGHTS THE LAMP...



MARIE SITS WIDE-EYED IN THE CENTER OF THE CHAMBER OF HORRORS...



NOW...MY FRIENDS ARE ALL HAPPY, HENRI... ALL HAPPY...

HENRI'S GAZE MOVES FROM TABLEAU TO TABLEAU...



RUINED! YOU'VE RUINED THE EXHIBITS!

INDEED, MARIE HAD ALTERED THE CHAMBER OF HORRORS... IT IS, IN FACT, NO LONGER HORRIBLE...



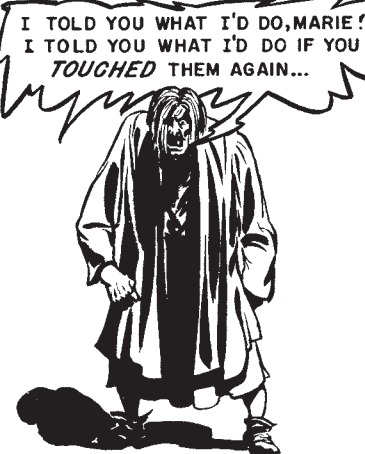
THEY WERE SO UNHAPPY, HENRI! WE WERE TORTURING THEM! THEY COULDN'T STAND IT ANY LONGER! I HAD TO DO IT!

YOU TURNED M'SIEU GARROTE'S HEAD AGAIN...

LOWERED M'SIEU EVERARD'S HATCHET...



HENRI'S FACE IS FLUSHED! HE GLENCHES HIS FISTS...MOVING TOWARD MARIE...



I TOLD YOU WHAT I'D DO, MARIE! I TOLD YOU WHAT I'D DO IF YOU TOUCHED THEM AGAIN...

HENRI'S HANDS CLOSE ABOUT MARIE'S WHITE THROAT...TIGHTER... TIGHTER... TIGHTER...

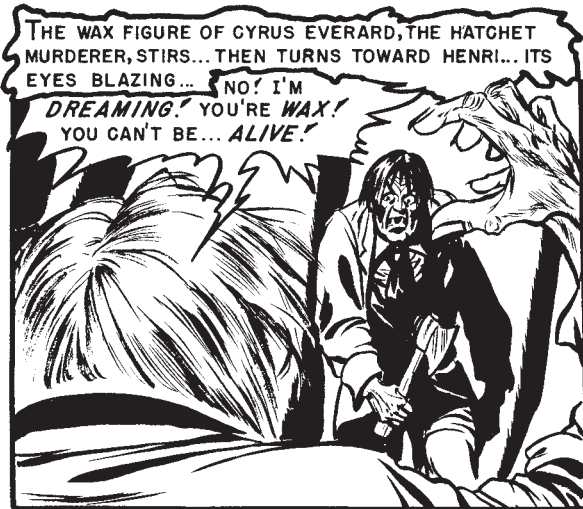


NO... HENRI... PLEASE... I... I... UG-G-G-H... N-N-G!

MARIE'S BODY GROWS LIMP AND SHE SLIPS FROM HENRI'S GRASP... DEAD! HENRI TURNS AT A SOUND BEHIND HIM...



I... I... NO! NO!



THE WAX FIGURE OF CYRUS EVERARD, THE HATCHET MURDERER, STIRS... THEN TURNS TOWARD HENRI... ITS EYES BLAZING... NO! I'M DREAMING! YOU'RE WAX! YOU CAN'T BE... ALIVE!



JACK THE RIPPER STEPS FROM HIS TABLEAU... HIS KNIFE GLEAMING IN THE GAS-LIGHT...

KEEP AWAY! KEEP AWAY!

THE OTHERS... JOHN GARROTE, THE STRANGLER... LUCY BORDMAN, WITH HER AX... GEORGE CRABTREE, THE NOTORIOUS POISONER... FREDRICK VON HEIMMER, THE BLUDGEONER, WITH HIS CLUB... ALL OF THEM MOVE TOWARD THE HYSTERICAL, COWERING HENRI MATAUD...

OUTSIDE, IN THE DARK DESERTED LONDON STREET, A BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAM FILLS THE AIR, ECHOING OVER THE CHIMNEY-POTS...



NO... NO... NO!



THE NEXT MORNING, WHEN THE HOGS LANE WAXWORKS DOES NOT OPEN ITS DOORS, THE POLICE INVESTIGATE! THE DOORS ARE FORGED! INSIDE, THEY FIND A STRANGE SIGHT! A HUGE TABLEAU OF WAX FIGURES STANDS REVERENTLY ABOUT THE BODY OF MARIE MATAUD AS SHE LIES ON A WAX-FLOWER BEDECKED ALTAR! AT THE FOOT OF THE ALTAR, A HUGE CANDLE BURNS! AND IF YOU LOOK REAL HARD, YOU CAN SEE... BENEATH THE TRANSLUCENT WAX OF THE TREMENDOUS CANDLE... THE REMAINS OF HENRI MATAUD...

HEE, HEE! AND THAT'S MY STORY, KIDDIES! DIDN'T IT JUST MELT YOUR GOLD HEARTS? YES, HENRI WAS ALL BURNED UP OVER WHAT MARIE DID TO THE CHAMBER OF HORRORS! BUT HE SOON COOLED OFF... WHAT WAS LEFT OF HIM, THAT IS! THE FIGURES THAT HE AND MARIE CREATED, CERTAINLY WERE LIFE-LIKE, WEREN'T THEY? TOO LIFE-LIKE IF YOU ASK ME! MARIE WASN'T CRAZY AFTER ALL, EH? IT WAS HENRI WHO WAS THE DRIP! SEE YOU NEXT IN THE VAULT OF HORROR!



GOOD LORD! LOOK!

HENRI MATAUD! HE... HE'S THE WICK... OF THE CANDLE!

THE END

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! I SEE BY YOUR LEERING FACES THAT YOU ARE EAGERLY AWAITING ANOTHER OF MY DELICIOUS HORROR SERVINGS! WELL, YOU WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED! THE FIRE IS LEAPING AND CRACKLING AROUND MY CAULDRON, AND ITS EVIL BREW IS BUBBLING AND STEAMING! SO COME CLOSER, WHERE YOU CAN INHALE THE FOUL-SMELLING AROMAS... AND YOUR HOSTESS, *THE OLD WITCH, MISTRESS OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR*, WILL DISH OUT A TASTY TALE OF TERROR CALLED...

REVENGE IS THE NUTS!



IT STOOD LIKE A HUGE TOMB IN THE DRAB, CEMETERY-LIKE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE! THE IVY THAT CLUNG TO ITS WEATHERED GREY WALLS CURLED LIKE SERPENTS ABOUT THE IRON BARS SET IN EACH WINDOW! IT WAS A FAMILIAR BUILDING TO THE PASSERS-BY! AT TIMES, IF ONE LISTENED, THE ANGUISHED SCREAMS AND HYSTERICAL RAVINGS OF THE INMATES COULD BE HEARD! THE IRON SIGN OVER THE GATES TOLD THE SOMBER STRUCTURE'S IDENTITY... *THE CROYDON INSANE ASYLUM...*

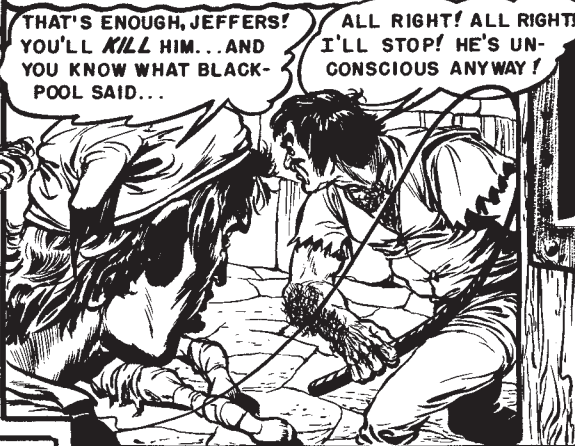
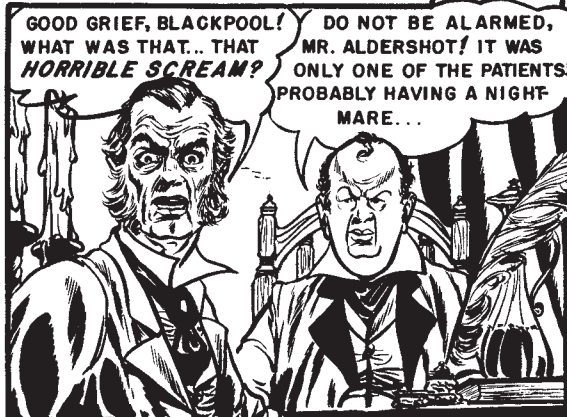
HA-HA-HA-HA!

AAAAAAAHHH!



INSIDE THE MOLDY STONE WALLS, IN ONE WING OF THE ASYLUM, WAS THE OFFICE OF LYTHAM BLACKPOOL ... THE DOCTOR IN CHARGE OF CROYDON! AT HIS DESK SAT AN UNWELCOME VISITOR. ...

BUT DOWN IN THE DAMP DEPTHS OF CROYDON INSANE ASYLUM, THE PATIENT SCREAMED AGAIN! IT WAS NOT A NIGHTMARE THE POOR SOUL WAS EXPERIENCING, BUT THE STING OF A HORSEHIDE WHIP. ...



GOOD GRIEF, BLACKPOOL! WHAT WAS THAT... THAT HORRIBLE SCREAM?

DO NOT BE ALARMED, MR. ALDERSHOT! IT WAS ONLY ONE OF THE PATIENTS! PROBABLY HAVING A NIGHTMARE...

THAT'S ENOUGH, JEFFERS! YOU'LL KILL HIM... AND YOU KNOW WHAT BLACKPOOL SAID...

ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! I'LL STOP! HE'S UNCONSCIOUS ANYWAY!

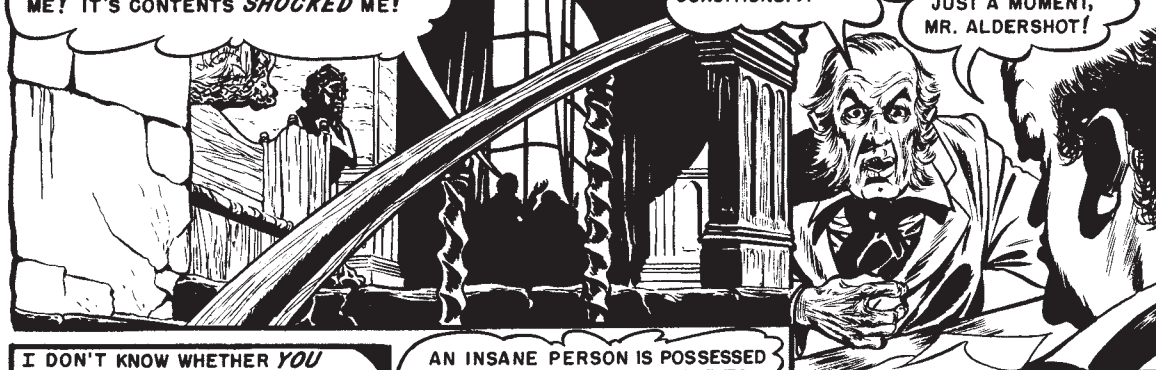
MEANWHILE, UPSTAIRS... IN LYTHAM BLACKPOOL'S OFFICE

IT IS THIS LETTER THAT HAS BROUGHT ME TO CROYDON, DOCTOR BLACKPOOL! A RELATIVE OF ONE OF THE PATIENTS HERE SENT IT TO ME! IT'S CONTENTS SHOCKED ME!

SHOCKED YOU, MR. ALDERSHOT?

YES! THE WRITER'S SON IS AN INMATE OF CROYDON! HE TOLD HIS MOTHER OF THE INHUMAN TREATMENT OF THE PATIENTS OF THIS INSTITUTION. SHE WRITES OF WHIPPING... STARVATION... UNSANITARY CONDITIONS. ...

JUST A MOMENT, MR. ALDERSHOT!

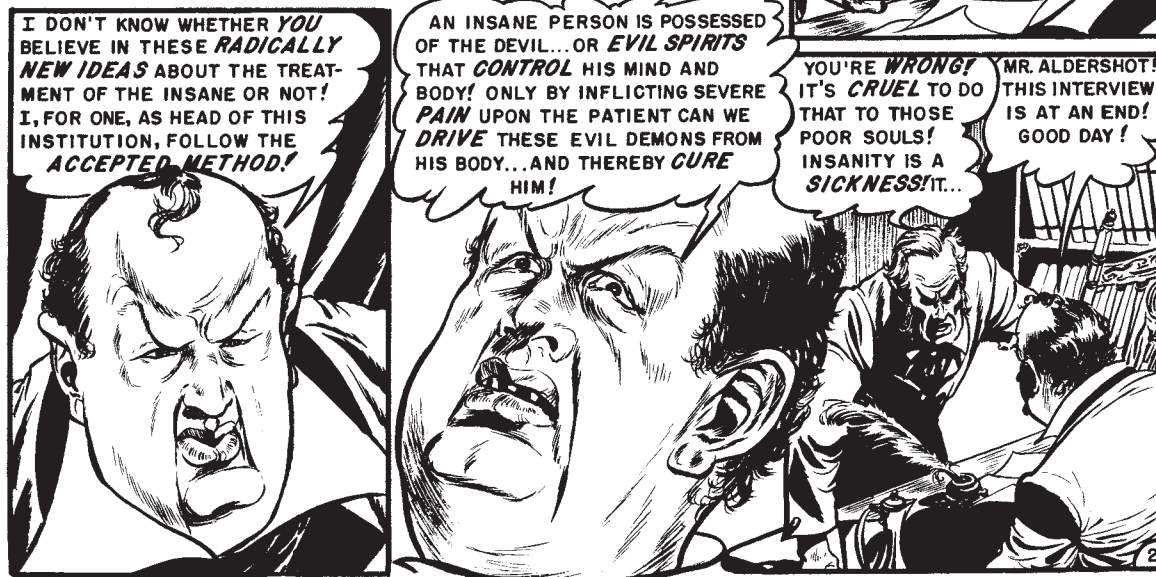


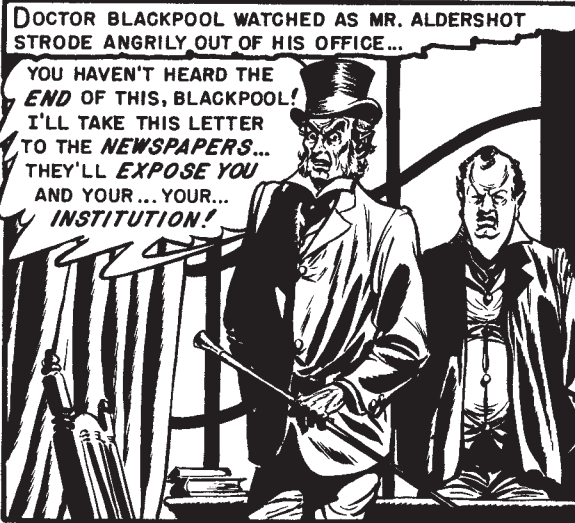
I DON'T KNOW WHETHER YOU BELIEVE IN THESE RADICALLY NEW IDEAS ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF THE INSANE OR NOT! I, FOR ONE, AS HEAD OF THIS INSTITUTION, FOLLOW THE ACCEPTED METHOD!

AN INSANE PERSON IS POSSESSED OF THE DEVIL... OR EVIL SPIRITS THAT CONTROL HIS MIND AND BODY! ONLY BY INFLECTING SEVERE PAIN UPON THE PATIENT CAN WE DRIVE THESE EVIL DEMONS FROM HIS BODY... AND THEREBY CURE HIM!

YOU'RE WRONG! IT'S CRUEL TO DO THAT TO THOSE POOR SOULS! INSANITY IS A SICKNESS! IT...

MR. ALDERSHOT! THIS INTERVIEW IS AT AN END! GOOD DAY!





DOCTOR BLACKPOOL WATCHED AS MR. ALDERSHOT STRODE ANGRILY OUT OF HIS OFFICE...

YOU HAVEN'T HEARD THE END OF THIS, BLACKPOOL! I'LL TAKE THIS LETTER TO THE NEWSPAPERS... THEY'LL EXPOSE YOU AND YOUR ... YOUR... INSTITUTION!

AFTER MR. ALDERSHOT LEFT, DOCTOR BLACKPOOL MADE HIS WAY DOWN THE STONE STEPS THAT LED TO THE DUNGEONS OF CROYDON! HE MOTIONED TO THE GUARD TO UNLOCK A DOOR! INSIDE, A YOUNG MAN LAY PROSTRATE ON THE STONE FLOOR ... SOBBING...

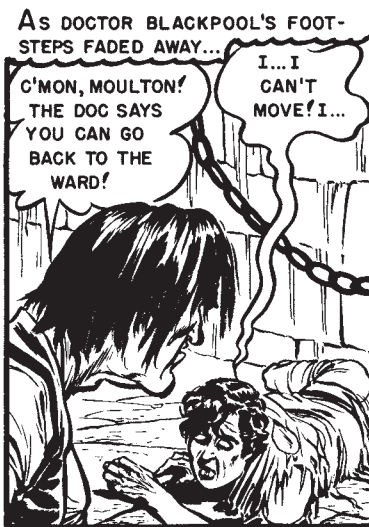
I HOPE YOU'VE LEARNED YOUR LESSON, MOULTON! NEXT TIME YOUR DEAR MOTHER VISITS YOU... DON'T COMPLAIN TO HER ABOUT HOW WE TREAT YOU...



DOCTOR BLACKPOOL TURNED AND LEFT THE DARK CELL...

ALL RIGHT, GUARD! YOU CAN TAKE HIM BACK TO THE WARD!

YES, DOCTOR!



AS DOCTOR BLACKPOOL'S FOOTSTEPS FADED AWAY...

C'MON, MOULTON! THE DOC SAYS YOU CAN GO BACK TO THE WARD!

I... I CAN'T MOVE! I...



THE GUARD PULLED THE LASH-SCARRED YOUNG MAN TO HIS FEET! HE SCREAMED IN PAIN...

I SAID... COME ON!

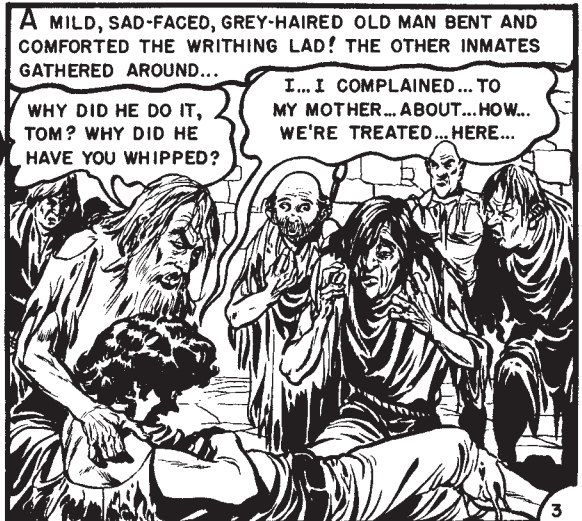
OWWWW! P-PLEASE... HAVE PITY...

ROUGHLY, THE GUARD PUSHED AND SHOVED THE PAIN-WRACKED BODY OF THOMAS MOULTON UP THE GREY STONE STEPS AND DOWN THE CORRIDOR TO THE WARD! UNLOCKING THE DOOR, THE GUARD HURLED HIM IN... WHERE HE WENT SPRAWLING...



IT... IT'S THOMAS!

BLACKPOOL'S HAD HIM LASHED!

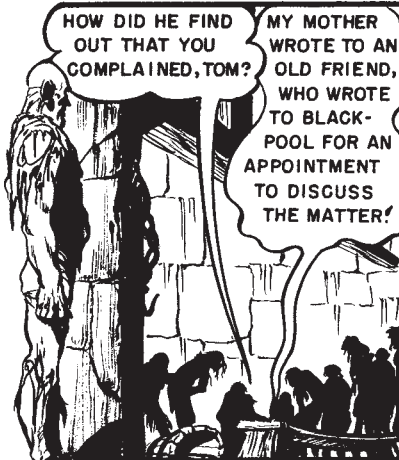


A MILD, SAD-FACED, GREY-HAIRED OLD MAN BENT AND COMFORTED THE WRITHING LAD! THE OTHER INMATES GATHERED AROUND...

WHY DID HE DO IT, TOM? WHY DID HE HAVE YOU WHIPPED?

I... I COMPLAINED... TO MY MOTHER... ABOUT... HOW... WE'RE TREATED... HERE...

BEYOND THE GROUP OF GATHERED INMATES STOOD A MONSTROUS MAN! HE STARED DUMBLY AT THEM... HIS FACE BLANK AND EXPRESSIONLESS...



HOW DID HE FIND OUT THAT YOU COMPLAINED, TOM?

MY MOTHER WROTE TO AN OLD FRIEND, WHO WROTE TO BLACKPOOL FOR AN APPOINTMENT TO DISCUSS THE MATTER!

THE YOUNG MAN CLUTCHED AT THE GREY-HAIRED OLD MAN'S TATTERED CLOTHES...

WHY DO YOU STAY HERE, MISTER FORTNEY? YOU ARE NOT INSANE! WHY DON'T YOU MAKE YOUR FAMILY TAKE YOU OUT?

THEY DON'T WANT TO, SON! THEY PAY DOCTOR BLACKPOOL TO KEEP ME HERE...



AT THAT MOMENT, DOCTOR BLACKPOOL ENTERED THE BARE WARD...

GET UP, FORTNEY! LEAVE HIM ALONE!

I'M ONLY TRYING TO COMFORT HIM! YOU...



DOCTOR BLACKPOOL SWUNG OUT AT THE OLD MAN, STRIKING HIM ACROSS THE FACE...



I SAID... LEAVE HIM ALONE!

THE HUGE, DUMB-FACED INMATE WHO HAD BEEN STARING BLANKLY AT THE BRUTAL SCENE SUDDENLY MOVED FORWARD! HIS EYES WERE WIDE NOW... HIS MOUTH TWISTED IN AN ANGRY SNARL...



NO, OLAF! NO! I'M NOT HURT...

KEEP AWAY! KEEP AWAY, YOU OVERGROWN... GUARDS! GUARDS!

OLAF GRABBED AT THE DOCTOR WITH A HUGE FIST AND SAVAGELY SMASHED THE OTHER FIST INTO THE DOCTOR'S SCREAMING FACE...



GUARDS! YAAAAAH!

STOP, OLAF! STOP!

THREE GUARDS BURST INTO THE WARD AND FINALLY DRAGGED THE SNARLING OLAF FROM THE COWERING DOCTOR...



PUT HIM... PUT HIM IN CHAINS! I'LL... I'LL DEAL WITH HIM LATER!

YES, SIR!

AFTER THE DOCTOR HAD LEFT THE WARD... (POOR OLAF! HE'LL HAVE HIM KILLED! DOCTOR BLACKPOOL WILL PUNISH HIM!)

THE OLD MAN SHOOK HIS HEAD... NO! THE DOCTOR WOULDN'T DO THAT! IT WOULD MEAN MONEY OUT OF HIS POCKET! FOR EVERY INMATE IN CROYDON, THE GOVERNMENT GIVES DOCTOR BLACKPOOL A SUM OF MONEY...

...WITH WHICH HE IS SUPPOSED TO FEED US PROPERLY... SEE THAT WE HAVE THE BEST OF CARE ... CLEAN BEDS... CLEAN CLOTHES... DON'T THEY GIVE HIM THE MONEY ANYMORE?

OF COURSE THEY DO, BUT HE POKETS IT! INSTEAD OF GOOD FOOD, HE FEEDS US ROTTEN CONDEMNED MEAT! INSTEAD OF CLEAN BEDS... CLEAN CLOTHES... HE GIVES US... THIS!

RAGS TO WEAR!
STRAW MATS TO SLEEP UPON!

MEANWHILE OLAF WAS CHAINED TO A RING EMBEDDED IN THE FLOOR OF A LARGE DUNGEON ROOM! THE CHAIN PERMITTED HIM TO MOVE IN A CIRCLE ABOUT THE RING... I'LL TEACH YOU TO HIT ME, YOU APE!

OLAF'S SCREAMS OF PAIN COULD BE HEARD BY THE INMATES OF THE WARD... POOR OLAF! HE'S BEING WHIPPED! IF HE EVER GETS HIS HANDS ON BLACKPOOL NOW, HE'LL TEAR HIM TO PIECES!

BUT DOCTOR BLACKPOOL WAS VERY CAREFUL TO STAND JUST OUTSIDE OF THE CONFINES OF THE CIRCLE THAT OLAF COULD MOVE IN... THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING, OLAF! JUST THE BEGINNING...

YES, KIDDIES! IT *WAS* JUST THE BEGINNING! EACH DAY, DOCTOR BLACKPOOL VISITED OLAF... TO TEASE HIM... TAUNT HIM...

HUNGRY, OLAF? I'LL WAGER YOU'D LIKE THIS FOOD, WOULDN'T YOU? HERE... HAVE SOME...

DOCTOR BLACKPOOL PUT THE TRAY OF FOOD JUST OUTSIDE OF OLAF'S REACH...

WHAT'S THE MATTER, OLAF? DON'T YOU WANT IT? AREN'T YOU HUNGRY? HA, HA, HA, HAH...



SUMMER PASSED, AND WINTER CAME TO CROYDON! COLD... COLD WINTER! THE INMATES SHIVERED IN THEIR SCANT RAGS...

DOCTOR BLACKPOOL CONTINUED TO MISTREAT POOR OLAF...

AS OLAF REACHED EAGERLY FOR THE WATER... HIS PARCHED LIPS QUIVERING...



THE FIRE'S DIED OUT!

HE'S TOO CHEAP TO PROVIDE HEAT!

WELL, OLAF? THIRSTY? HERE'S A PITCHER OF WATER FOR YOU!



OH, DEAR! THAT WAS CLUMSY OF ME!

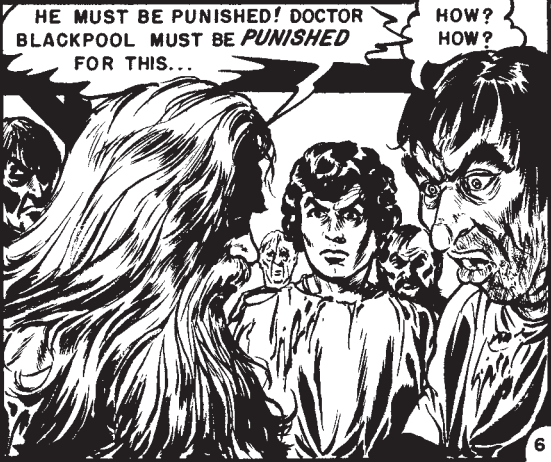


AND WHILE OLAF FELL TO HIS KNEES TO SIP UP THE SPILLED WATER FROM THE SMASHED PITCHER...

IN THE WARD, OLD MILD, GREY-HAIRED MR. FORTNEY PLEADED WITH THE OTHER INMATES...



DRINK IT, OLAF... DRINK IT LIKE AN ANIMAL... THE ANIMAL YOU ARE!



HE MUST BE PUNISHED! DOCTOR BLACKPOOL MUST BE PUNISHED FOR THIS...

HOW? HOW?



THE OLD MAN OUTLINED HIS PLAN! THEN... GUARD! QUICKLY! MR. FORTNEY! HE'S DYING!

WHA...



THE GUARD UNLOCKED THE DOOR AND APPROACHED THE OLD MAN WHO LAY GASPING ON A STRAW MAT! SUDDENLY...

LET GO OF ME, YOU... YOU... CRAZY... FOOLS!

HIS KEYS! GET HIS KEYS!



IN HIS OFFICE, DOCTOR BLACKPOOL GLANCED UP FROM HIS DESK TO SEE...

YOU... ALL OF YOU! HOW... HOW DID YOU GET OUT?

GRAB HIM!



THE GRIM-FACED INMATES CARRIED THE STRUGGLING, SHRIEKING DOCTOR DOWN THE GREY STONE STEPS THAT LED TO THE DUNGEON ROOMS...

LET ME GO! LET ME GO!

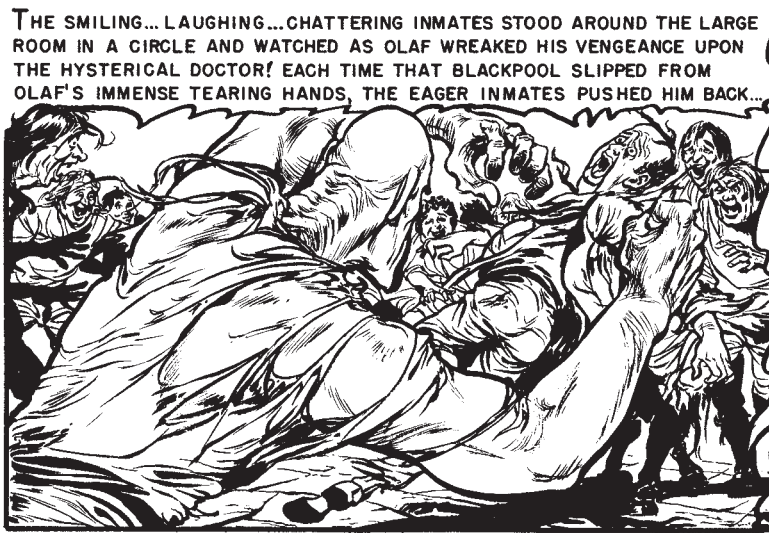
HURRY! DOWN HERE!



THE DOOR TO OLAF'S ROOM WAS UNLOCKED, AND ANXIOUS HANDS SHOVED DOCTOR BLACKPOOL IN...

LOOK, OLAF! LOOK WHAT WE'VE BROUGHT YOU!

NO! NO! NOT THAT...



THE SMILING... LAUGHING... CHATTERING INMATES STOOD AROUND THE LARGE ROOM IN A CIRCLE AND WATCHED AS OLAF WREAKED HIS VENGEANCE UPON THE HYSTERICAL DOCTOR! EACH TIME THAT BLACKPOOL SLIPPED FROM OLAF'S IMMENSE TEARING HANDS, THE EAGER INMATES PUSHED HIM BACK...

AND SO I LEAVE THE HAPPY CIRCLE OF MANIACS AT CROYDON... ALL OF WHOM SEEM TO BE HAVING A RIPPING GOOD TIME... AND BRING MY STORY TO ITS INEVITABLE END! I HOPE YOU WERE MAD ABOUT POOR DOCTOR BLACKPOOL'S PUNISHMENT! EVEN NICE, MILD, OLD MR. FORTNEY WENT CRAZY OVER IT! OH, BY THE WAY! IF YOU WANT TO GO CRAZY... JUST SEND FOR MY PICTURE! NOT A DRAWING, BUT A FULL 5 X 7 PHOTOGRAPH OF ME! FOR THE INFORMATION, READ THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER! 'BYE, NOW!

THE END